

Current Articles & Research Resources, October 24

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In this weekly post, we feature helpful research tools and recent articles of interest to the legislative community.

- Read about Amazon's role in state and local [elections](#). (Reuters, October 15, 2019)
- Review data related to [vaping-associated lung injury](#) cases in Utah. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, October 22, 2019)
- Consider what some states are doing to address [noise](#) pollution's effect on wildlife. (Stateline, October 22, 2019)
- Find out where to dispose of [unused prescription medications](#) properly. (Drug Enforcement Administration, accessed October 23, 2019)

Members of the Texas legislative community may request the articles below [here](#) or by calling 512-463-1252.

- "Pocket prairies: Natural solutions to unnatural flooding." By Henry Gass. *Christian Science Monitor*, October 21, 2019, pp. 18-19.
Highlights the numerous "pocket prairies" established in Houston, and nearby native prairies, the Deer Park Prairie and the Katy Prairie Conservancy. Explains their role in handling storm water and providing wildlife habitat and park space.
- "[Total state and local business taxes: State-by-state estimates for FY18](#)." *Council on State Taxation*, October 17, 2019, pp. 1-25.
Compares state and local business taxes paid in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, including business property taxes, sales and excise taxes, gross receipts taxes, corporate income and franchise taxes, unemployment insurance taxes, and pass-through business taxes. Finds Texas' business share of total state and local taxes was 62.3 percent in fiscal year 2018. Notes a majority of the increase in severance taxes occurred in Texas due to higher oil prices, and Texas had the largest dollar increase (\$2.4 billion) in business property tax revenue.
- "Eyes on the border wall." By Camila DeChalus. *CQ Weekly*, October 7, 2019, pp. 22-25.
Details the technologies being used to supplement security at the Texas border with Mexico and the federal government's efforts to fund and deploy newer high-tech equipment. Addresses how eminent domain issues and Texas landowners' privacy rights are affected by the technological approaches to border security.
- "Suffering in many languages." By Tanvi Msra and Camila DeChalus. *CQ Weekly*, September 30, 2019, pp. 20-25.
Addresses the significant increase in people from India and other South Asian countries seeking asylum in the United States. Discusses the unique challenges encountered by non-Spanish-speaking migrants and the desperate measures they take for assistance.

- "Self-driving cars: Autonomous ways." *Economist*, October 12th-18th, 2019, pp. 65-66.
Points out China's approach to self-driving cars —heavy on infrastructure and government oversight —may surpass that of western car makers, placing the country at the forefront of an estimated \$2 trillion market by 2040.
- "Sports events pose risks for violence." By Arianna Prothero and Denisa R. Superville. *Education Week*, September 25, 2019, pp. 1, 14-15.
Discusses challenges of protecting students and the public from acts of violence at school-sponsored athletic events. Focuses on school districts in Texas.
- "The K-12 takeover: Big philanthropy's bid to privatize education." By Andrea Gabor. *Harper's Magazine*, November 2019, pp. 55-63,
Looks at the influence of philanthropists on charter schools, including the Knowledge Is Power Program [KIPP], away from a "vision of teacher- and community-led schools" to centers of educational and social reform.
- "Background checks for firearm purchases: Problem areas and recommendations to improve effectiveness." *Health Affairs*, October 2019, pp. 1702-1710.
Explains why the benefits of background checks in reducing the risk of firearm violence have been seen only among those directly affected, and not at the population level. Recommends actions to remedy the design and implementation of background checks so they can better prevent violence.
- "Linking public safety and public health data for firearm suicide prevention in Utah." By Catherine Barber, et al. *Health Affairs*, October 2019, pp. 1695-1701.
Presents a case study of how firearm stakeholders, state agency representatives, legislators, and suicide researchers came together in Utah to study firearm suicide prevention and deliver actionable findings for all parties.
- "High unintended pregnancy rate spurs efforts to ease contraceptive access." By Rita Rubin. *JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association)*, October 15, 2019, pp. 1434-1436.
Outlines approaches to improve contraceptive access that could be undertaken at the federal, state, and private industry levels, including producing an over-the-counter oral contraceptive product, permitting pharmacists to prescribe contraceptives, online resources, and addressing insurance issues.
- "The long-term outlook for the Texas economy." By M Ray Perryman. *Perryman Report and Texas Letter*, Vol. 36, No. 7, pp. 1-3, 6.
Summarizes the latest long-term projections for the Texas economy. Considers the impact of the oil and gas sector on the state.
- "Buying solar energy by the minute: Aligning benefits with costs." By Robert L. Borlick. *Public Utilities Fortnightly*, October 2019, pp. 38-40, 65.
Focuses on the **solar energy incentive programs** known as Net Energy Metering. Reviews various incentives provided for residential rooftop solar photovoltaic systems in some states, including Texas.
- "**Tech giants fight digital right-to-repair bills.**" By Elaine S. Povich. *Stateline (Pew Charitable Trusts)*, October 16, 2019, pp. 1-5.
Examines states' lack of success in passing legislation that will allow independent repair shops and consumers to gain access to manufacturers' parts, manuals, and schematics for cellphones.
- "**Legislative summary: 86th Texas legislative session.**" *Texas Board of Nursing Bulletin*, October 2019, pp. 6-8.
Provides summaries of bills affecting the nursing profession.
- "**Vote for CPRIT.**" By Sean Price. *Texas Medicine*, October 2019, pp. 18-23.

Highlights the achievements and contributions of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas [CPRIT]. Urges support of the constitutional amendment to extend CPRIT's funding.

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